

Another garden wilderness to tackle



This has to be levelled to the ground.

We have a new customer who returned from Greece last Wednesday to discover that his housing association had identified his garden as a possible run for rats. I would certainly agree . We decided to work today, Sunday, because tomorrow I'm going in for my operation and I don't know how long it will be before my body is well enough to take the punishment that I give it when I do gardening. I am not saying I don't enjoy the work. It is demanding especially when you carry things or bend down.

My electric chainsaw has a new chain, so it just zipped through everything like the proverbial knife through butter. When a lawn has not been attended to for some years, and I refer to his front lawn, there are layers of yellow grass that never see the light of day. I did three passes of the lawnmower and I know that when I go back next time, whenever

that is, the grass will have recovered and it will start growing up and then I can give the lawn a proper cut. As I say, you can't achieve the Garden of Eden in one go.

The customer talked a little bit about his life in Greece, where he spends five months a year. I think it was Skyros where he goes. He says it is a very friendly place and you can more or less go up and speak to anybody and also women can feel free to go out on their own. He told us that he has made more friends there than he does in his seven months back in the UK. He says that many people go there year after year, and this is probably due to the reasonable cost of living and the 60 beaches from which you can choose. I got the impression that he has been recently widowed or lost his best friend, but there are certain things you don't pry into unless invited.

So, tomorrow is the great day when I go into hospital for my intervention. It is hardly a major thing like a heart transplant; the surgeon who does inguinal hernias has been doing the same thing for 20 years, so he knows exactly what he's doing. I'm going to have a net placed where the weak part is in the musculature and that will eventually become part of the body. I must not eat anything tomorrow so it's a glass of water in the morning and that's it. Françoise will come with me and be around in the hospital and then take me home.

Very poor weather is forecast for this week. I'm very glad we got some sunshine today to do the major cutting work. He did get another quote from our customer. The gardener was from Fishponds, Bristol, and his quote was substantially more than ours but he wouldn't tell me what it was. He also said that he felt that they were just in it for the money. Sometimes I think I under quote, other times I may over quote but normally I get it right. The main thing is that people are happy. We only take money at the end of the job and then only when people say they are happy with our work. I don't want bad karma.